

How Canadians will be joining in; Major demonstrations around country bookend global week of action

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Canadians watching the worldwide youth-led climate action strikes Friday may be wondering why our streets aren't also packed with protesters.

Well, thanks to the organic way these kinds of grassroots movements come about, Canada will have its day to demand governments curb carbon emissions a week later, on Sept. 27. The flagship event will take place Friday in New York City, where 16-year-old Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, who began the "Fridays for Future" movement last year, will lead a demonstration and march that could see hundreds of thousands of participants.

While smaller events are planned to take place in Canada to coincide with this Friday's global strikes, the major climate action demonstrations in this country are scheduled for next Sept. 27 and will bookend the week of action. On that day, major demonstrations and marches are planned across the country, including ones in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, where Thunberg will be in attendance. Those events are already gaining momentum, thanks in part to some school administrations that have given the green light to students who wish to take part. The Toronto District School Board says absences on Sept. 27 will be excused with parental permission, while the Montreal school board has moved a PED day to next Friday to give students the day off. Concordia University and Dawson College in Montreal have also cancelled classes to encourage students and faculty to attend. In the west, the president of the University of British Columbia said that while the school will remain open, he expects students and faculty may elect to participate.

More than 100 events are planned across the country for the 27th, including a rally at Queen's Park in Toronto that will begin around 11 a.m. followed by a march down University Ave.

"The main message is that we can't continue business as usual, because that's what's killing us," said Allie Rougeot, co-ordinator of the Toronto Fridays for Future chapter and a U of T student. "Everybody is part of the climate solution and every single person that comes out here can make a big impact."

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